

Beginners' Guide to Native Bee Habitats

Bees and gardening

Pollinators move pollen, a necessary element for plant reproduction, from one plant flower to another while collecting nectar for food.

Including the non-native honey bee, these pollinators are crucial for human food systems whether farming or gardening as well as the stability and diversity of natural ecosystems. Missouri has over 450 species of native bees.

Pollinated foods include melons, squash, apples, tomatoes, sunflowers, blueberries, coffee, vanilla, avocado, grapes, potatoes, and almonds.



Where do bees naturally live?

Most bees do not live in hive colonies. Native bees are mainly solitary and utilize plant material, such as hollowed stems, and tunnels in the ground to build their homes.

Why create bee-friendly spaces?

Most yards have grass, non-native decorative plants, and are heavily manicured. Although this fulfills a historically desired look, it stresses pollinators as the native plants they need to be fed and housed are limited or removed entirely.

Natural ecosystem support

To create a pollinator friendly space in your backyard or community follow these tips and underlined links to view in-depth resources:

- Plant native species and buy local if possible
- Opt for safe insecticide methods that do not harm pollinators
- Avoid using herbicides, especially those with glyphosate
- Create a designated "wild" area in your outdoor space that is left alone for pollinators to build homes and plants to grow freely

Project: build a bee hotel



For a hands-on project, you can build a bee hotel like this one that mimics a bee's natural ecosystem and provides an all season habitat.

Follow this instructional guide to build your own.